

NAA NEWS

National Aeronautic Association



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Air Force Academy, Pilot Win NAC Achievement Awards

The National Aeronautic Association (NAA) will present awards for leadership and outstanding achievement to an Air Force pilot and to the Air Force Academy during its Fall Award Ceremony in Arlington, VA, on November 5th. The awards, established by the National Aviation Club (NAC), are administered by NAA.

Chosen to receive the NAC Katherine & Marjorie Stinson Award for Achievement for the year 2001 is Captain Jodi A. Neff, USAF, the first woman to command a Special Operations Low Level (SOLL) II C-5 Galaxy aircraft.

NAC's Cliff Henderson Award for Achievement goes to the United States Air Force Academy, which has served as a model institution for young people aspiring to a military leadership positions in the engineering and aerospace sciences.

"The Stinson and Henderson awards highlight the exceptional skills of our Air Force men and women, and the important role the Air Force Academy has played in preparing them for service", said Stewart "Bud" Orr, President of the NAC. "These awards are particularly timely as our nation prepares to call on these outstanding individuals during our time of need."

Captain Neff, a C-5 pilot and flight instructor assigned to the 3d Airlift Squadron at Dover Air Force Base in Delaware, has risen quickly through the ranks since beginning her career as a military aviator in 1994. She first distinguished herself as a C-21pilot in the Middle East, where she flew more than 50 missions in support of Operation Southern Watch, the defense of the southern no-fly zone over Iraq. After qualifying on the C-5, she was handpicked for special operations duty, a position in which she has served as chief of both the Special Operations Tactics and Special Operations Training offices. She "single-handedly reorganized" the SOLL II training program--a consequence of the exceptional performance she has demonstrated in the left seat of the Galaxy aircraft.

"The elite SOLL II mission requires carefully selected operators to fly the C-5 at night, in marginal weather, at low level and with night-vision goggles, into unlit, hostile, and austere locations. Employing the C-5 in this flight regime requires superb flying skills and leadership abilities of the very highest order," said Gen. Charles T. Robertson, Jr., Commander, Air Mobility Command.

Among her various tours in the field, Captain Neff is credited with airlifting equipment to U.S. and allied forces in Kuwait during Operation Desert Storm, with transporting munitions to NATO forces in the Kosovo theater, and with flying humanitarian missions in East Timor and Korea.

The Air Force Academy was chosen for the prestigious Henderson Award for its role in motivating and preparing young men and women for positions of leadership in America's defense community. Students at the Academy are put through an intense program in four basic areas: academic studies, military training, physical education, and character development. Cadets can choose from one of 30 majors and five minors. Regardless of which major they pick, all cadets receive a Bachelor of Science degree. Since its founding in 1954, the school has turned out over 33,000 officers with science diplomas.

Although all students at the Academy are exposed to aeronautical subjects, about half of each year's class ends up majoring in science or engineering--the specialties for which the school is especially well known and respected. According to Lt. General John Dallager, Superintendent of the Academy, the aeronautical-engineering major "culminates in a year-long sequence that focuses on aircraft and engine design methodology for future Air Force fighter and transport systems.... Through the years, cadet research has led to, or helped confirm, the need for many changes to aircraft designs."

The Academy can also boast of record-breaking accomplishments in space technology. As General Dallager reports, "On January 24, 2000, Academy cadets became the first-ever undergraduate team to design and launch into orbit their own satellite."

The Katherine & Marjorie Stinson Award for Achievement was created in 1997 to honor a living woman for "an outstanding and enduring contribution, a meritorious flight, or a singular technical development in the field of aviation, aeronautics, space, or related sciences." Captain Jodi Neff will be the fifth recipient of the award.

The Cliff Henderson Award for Achievement was originally conceived as a racing trophy but was reactivated in 1985 to recognize "a living individual or group whose vision, leadership, or skill has made a significant and lasting contribution to the promotion and advancement of aviation or space activity." The only other time that an organization rather than an individual has won the Henderson Award was in 1994 when ten aerospace companies were honored as a group for their participation in Desert Storm.

NAA is a non-profit, membership organization devoted to fostering opportunities to participate fully in aviation activities and to promoting public understanding of the importance of aviation and space flight to the United States. For additional information about NAA and its mission, log on to www.naa-usa.org.

